

Message Text

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TO ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

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INFORM CONSULS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BTRA, BBAK, XJ

SUBJECT: PAN AFRICAN BUSINESS CENTER (PANAF)

1. SUBJECT ORGANIZATION HAS RECENTLY CONTACTED SEVERAL AFRICAN EMBASSIES IN WEST AFRICA CONCERNING PLANS TO CONDUCT A "TRADE MISSION" TO THESE COUNTRIES. IN VIEW OF THE POSSIBILITY THAT OTHER AFRICAN POSTS MAY AT SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE BE CONTACTED BY PANAF, THE FOLLOWING SUMMARY REPORT ON THE ORGANIZATION IS BEING TRANSMITTED FOR THE POSTS' INFORMATION ONLY.

2. PANAF WAS ORGANIZED WITH THE STATED INTENTION OF BRINGING TOGETHER AMERICAN MINORITY BUSINESS FIRMS WITH AFRICAN BUSINESS INTERESTS IN ORDER TO PURSUE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AMERICAN INVESTMENT IN AFRICA, U.S. EXPORTS TO AFRICA, AND AFRICAN EXPORTS TO THE UNITED STATES.

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3. IN 1972, AS AN ORGANIZATION DEVOTED TO EXPANDING

AMERICAN MINORITY ENTERPRISE IN THE EXPORT FIELD, PANAF OBTAINED A CONTRACT FROM USDOC'S OFFICE OF MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (OMBE) TO UNDERTAKE FOREGOING FUNCTION. OMBE PROVIDED FUNDS TO UNDERWRITE THE COST OF PANAF OPERATIONS.

4. THE OMBE CONTRACT EXPIRES ON 31 AUGUST 1975 AND WILL NOT REPEAT NOT BE AUTOMATICALLY RENEWED. OMBE PLANS TO INVITE BIDS ON A SIMILAR CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENT. APPROXIMATELY SIX ORGANIZATIONS ARE KNOWN TO BE INTERESTED IN BIDDING ON CONTRACT.

5. CONGRESSMAN CHARLES DIGGS, MEMBER HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE AND FORMER CHAIRMAN OF BLACK CONGRESSIONAL CAUCUS, HAS DEMANDED THAT OMBE UNDERTAKE REVIEW OF PANAF OPERATIONS. USDOC'S OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS AND SECURITY HAS BEEN CONDUCTING AN INVESTIGATION. THIS INVESTIGATION IS NOT REPEAT NOT COMPLETE, BUT HAS SO FAR UNCOVERED AT LEAST ONE INSTANCE OF APPARENT FISCAL IRREGULARITY WHICH WORKED TO PERSONAL BENEFIT OF DARWIN BOLDEN, PRESIDENT OF PANAF. NO REPEAT NO INDICTABLE OFFENSE HAS BEEN UNCOVERED OR ALLEGED.

6. BECAUSE OF OMBE FUNDING, PANAF LITERATURE HAS CLAIMED USDOC SPONSORSHIP WHICH OBVIOUSLY IS CERTAINLY CORRECT. SPECIFIC OVERSEAS ACTIVITIES, HOWEVER, SUCH AS TRADE MISSIONS, ARE NOT REPEAT NOT SPONSORED BY BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE WHICH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR USDOC OVERSEAS OPERATIONS IN TRADE PROMOTION. PANAF HAS NOT REPEAT NOT SOUGHT OUR ASSISTANCE, NOR WOULD ITS CONCEPTION OF TRADE MISSIONS FIT USDOC'S CRITERIA FOR AN INDUSTRY-ORGANIZED/GOVERNMENT-APPROVED (IOGA) TRADE MISSION. APPRECIATE THAT EMBASSIES MAY HAVE DIFFICULTY EXPLAINING TO LOCAL ENTITIES THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE SPONSORSHIP OF PANAF AS AN ORGANIZATION AND SPECIFIC INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES SUCH AS A TRADE MISSION BUT IMPORTANT THAT POSTS BE AWARE OF DISTINCTION. OMBE SUBSIDY TO PANAF IN NO REPEAT NO WAY QUALIFIES THEIR TRADE MISSIONS FOR SPECIAL USG CONSIDERATION NOR OBLIGATES EMBASSIES TO EXTEND FACILITIES BEYOND THAT FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OTHER PRIVATE GROUPS OF BUSINESS TRAVELERS. SHOULD, AT SOME FUTURE DATE, SPECIFIC PANAF MISSION QUALIFY FOR IOGA STATUS POSTS WILL BE INFORMED WELL IN ADVANCE OF PARTICULAR MISSION IN NORMAL FASHION FOR IOGAS.

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